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San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister Introduces Tax Bill Redesign

In keeping with his initiatives to improve customer service and streamline the tax collection process, San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector Dan McAllister today announced the introduction of a redesigned tax bill that features many dramatic improvements over the current tax bills issued by the County Treasurer-Tax Collector. "The redesign of the tax bills has been long overdue," said McAllister. "The last major change to the tax bills was made over 50 years ago and there has not been any real change to them for over 33 years. Over that time, technology and taxpayers' needs have evolved while the tax bills have remained virtually unchanged. We've taken several practically obsolete documents and made them responsive to the needs of the taxpayers of San Diego County."

The redesign affects approximately 905,000 secured property tax bills and several thousand other tax bills such as supplemental tax bills and unsecured property tax bills issued by the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office annually. The Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office began mailing secured property tax bills, which are first in the redesigned series, on Monday, September 20, 2004.

The redesigned tax bills include user-friendly features such as: dual stacked payment stubs at the bottom of the bill for easy detachment and filing of the remaining portions; a single, consolidated toll-free number (877-829-4732) that offers "one-stop customer care"; and more logical placement of important taxpayer information in an easy to read print. Additionally, barcode information and mail codes on the tax bills will expedite processing of bills and refunds, allowing tax collection professionals to focus more time on helping taxpayers.

"The idea for redesigning the tax bills was sparked by complaints and suggestions from taxpayers that I repeatedly encountered after taking office as San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector in December 2002," commented McAllister. "Taxpayers often expressed that their tax bills were too hard to understand or that they could not find the proper information on the tax bills. Similar comments were echoed during focus groups that we subsequently held," added McAllister. Discussions with more than 2,000 San Diego County residents and presentations before all 18 City Councils in the County confirmed that the tax bills were in desperate need of a makeover. "There was a huge gap between what taxpayers wanted and what they actually got from their existing tax bills," said McAllister. "I am very proud to say that we were able to take the best ideas and practices from taxpayers, the private sector, as well as technology experts and incorporate them into our new tax bills. This tax bill redesign is very much a product of the people of San Diego County."

The redesigned tax bills initiative required the partnership of many San Diego County departments, including the Assessor's Office, the Auditor and Controller and General Services. The Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office worked closely with each of these departments to address the technological, regulatory and operational issues associated with the entire tax bill process.

The San Diego County Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office provides investment, banking, and other financial services for the County and collects all property taxes. The Office also manages the \$4 billion investment pool for the County and collects nearly \$3 billion in property taxes annually. The Office has 115 employees and five service facilities located throughout the County to serve residents of San Diego County.

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